VANCOUVER ISLAND ST ASSOCIATION

VISTA NEWSLETTER

ATARI 520ST APRIL 1987 ATARI 1040ST

MIDI-MUSIC PROGRAMS FOR ATARI ST.

By
Bill Hart

This is a partial list of music programs available for the Atari ST.

K MINSTREL; available from KUMA COMPUTERS LTD., 12, Horseshoe Park, Pangbourne, Berkshire, UK, RG8 7JW. Has Gem Music display editor, can process such goodies as slurs and triplets, accele randos and crescendos. It uses standard music notation; for both mono and color monitors. Cost about $40.00 Cndn

DR T's MUSIC SOFTWARE, 66 Louise Road, Chesnut HilL, M.A. This outfit has a number of excellent programs presently being converted to ST. Because things are moving so fast at Dr.T's, it is advisable to write to them and get the latest product info. Here is a list of the programs presently available for the ST.

(1) KEYBOARD CONTROLLED SEQUENCER.
Full MIDI parameter /note editing - cut and paste editing, 48 tracks,(WOW) 50,000+ notes on 520, 130,000 on 1040 $195. US.

(2) MIDI RECORDING STUDIO, for MIDI Beginners, has 6 tracks with full cut and paste editing. Compatible with Item 1. $39.00 US.

(3) THE COPYIST, is publication quality scoring/editing/printing program. Will print to your screen what you play while you play it, which you can then send to your printer. Requires coupling to item #1 to operate, $195 US.

(4) C-Z PATCH EDITOR/LIBRARIAN AND DUMP. Has 240 sounds on the disk and will operate with or without Item 1. Displays graphically your electronic ASDR envelopes etc as you design sounds. Price $100. US.

(5) LEVEL 2 KEYBOARD SEQUENCER. No price yet.

MUSIC STUDIO, by Activision, This program, available locally at about $80.00, will record, edit and play back up to 15 instru ments simultaneously or drive a MIDI from your keyboard. I didn't have much luck with this one but everybody else seems to love it. I was surprised to find it is also the worlds biggest selling program.

SOUNDWAVE, SW1. A single track MIDI sequencer that records and displays each note as it is played on 7 octave keyboard. $50.00 US

SOUNDWAVE, SW8. Much like DR.T's Keyboard sequencer. Has 8 track professional capabilities, includes edit phrases, filters and auto punch in for track editing / step time recording. Cost around $300.00 Canadian from SHANNER INTERNATIONAL, 453 Ravendale, Mountain View, CA., 94043. I found it very complica ted. Of course, it might make more sense to someone who reads music.

ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING, 2210, Wiltshire Blvd, Santa Monica, CA, 90403., has a Midi sequencer with keyboard velocity sensing and which will store 200,000 notes in a 1040. Will support 16 channels of 128 unit Midi operation. This one will even teach you to read music if you don't mind having your musical education messed up. Will store 3 hours of music in 1Mb of 1040 RAM. Only $50.00 US. Also available are pre-programmed disks of Beatles, Classical #1 and #2 and Top 40, all at $20.00 each US.

INTERSECT SOFTWARE, Orchestrator. Info not yet available. $35.00 US from Computer Garden, 106 W. Carey St.,Plains, PA., 18705. US

XLENT SOFTWARE, Music Box. "Call" to Computer Garden for info.

EZ TRACK ST from HYBRID ARTS, 11920 W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, 90064 Low cost bridge (16 track) between Electronic Keyboard and your ST. This is basically a record and mix unit. You can layer your sounds as you record to get the music you want. $65.00 US. Oh yes, it records

Digitally which means you can probably change pitch and tempo without losing quality.

DX DROID. Has five programs, 1; patch librarian, 2; numeric editor, 3; graphics editor, 4; automated patch loader 5; DROID function that is capable of inventing its own sounds by using random numbers and artificial intelligence. (sounds like my Ex Mother-in-Law) $180.00 US, also from HYBRID ARTS..

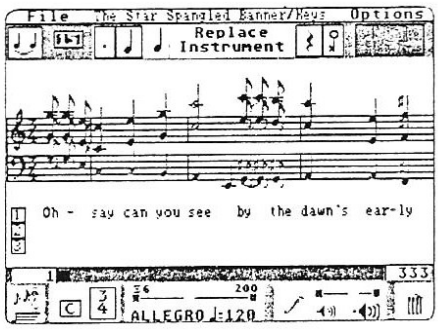
TRANSFORM XTRACK. West Germany builds this one.(Ve haff ways off making you track) Multi track recording and sequencing system for professional music production. Real time and step input on unlimited tracks, uses mouse on Gem with DD Menus. Click on sliders and graphs to modify recorded sounds. Compatible with Yamaha, Casio and Roland synths and Drum units. From BEAM TEAM, 6100 Adeline St., Oakland, CA.94608. $200.00 US

GUITAR WIZARD. Simple music program for any household that has kids, guitars and deaf parents. From BAUDVILLE, 1001 Medical Park Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI, 49506 and only $40.00 US

MIDI PIANO ROLLS. Old piano rolls have been recorded on floppies which you can now ram through your ST. Each PIANO ROLL DISK contains several files of songs directly translated from original "piyanna rolls". From MICRO W DISTRIBUTING, 1342B Route 23, Butler, New Jersey, 07405 and priced at 20.00 each US.

MIDI STUDIO. from AUTO LIGHT INC., 815 Fairfield Road, Burlingame, CA 94010. Midi studio will record and play back on 16 channels with 124 layers. Editor permits changes in note value, velocity and duration. Has 128 built-in instrument sounds and uses the mouse and graphics. $100.00 US.

I have in hand a "Product Release" from the SONUS CORPORATION,21430 Strathern street, Suite H, Canoga Park, CA, 91304. Item 1 is "MASTERPIECE" which will permit you to do more things with music than I ever thought possible. Would you believe forty-five separate operation. You can Auto-punch your mutings while your sequence value inputs your SMPTE and randomizes your pitch wheel with a De-flam and loop flag your count-off. I mean, who could ask for anything more. Price? Around $400.00 Canadian.

The second program is called "SUPERSCORE" and will write to your screen from your keyboard as you play. It's a simple step from there to paper. Will also change keys at the touch of a button and alter chord signatures as required. The price on that one seems to be the same as "MASTERPIECE", about $400.00.

CP/M Emulator for the ST

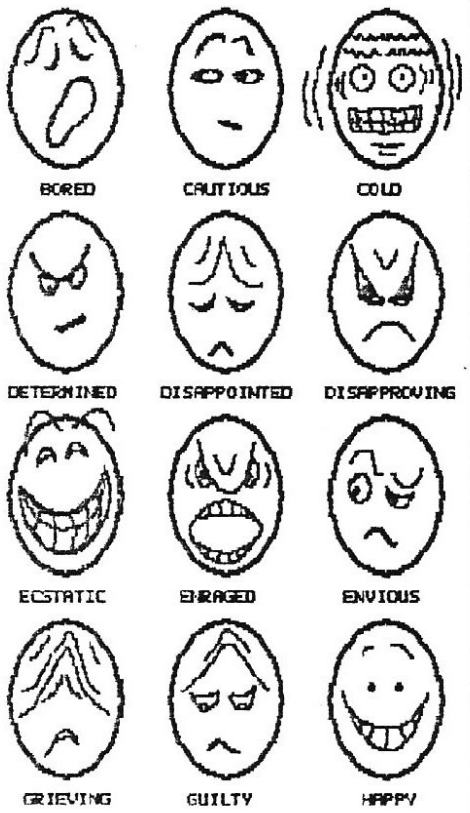
by Eric Walker

Since the CP/M-80 Emulator, for the Atari ST, became public domain, a lot of interest has been generated. CP/M stands for Command Processor, for Micro-computers. The 80 stands for the type of processor being used, which in this case is a Z-80 microproces sing chip from Zilog. The Normal ST uses a version of CP/M, called CP/M 68K, with a GEM overlay. The 68K stands for 68000 which is the micro-processor that the ST uses.

The CP/M-80 emulator, is not a hardware emulator, but a software emulator. Being a software emulator, it is naturally slower than most hardware emulators. Because the Atari processor is so fast, it will actually pretend to be a Z-80, as fast as my Apple //e, and my Apple uses a hardware emulator.

The standard CP/M was originally developed about 1974, for the 8080 microprocessor, as a standardized high performance operating system. Because it was standardized throughout all 8080 systems, no matter what the configuration, it became very popular, with all program developers. As the new 8080 compatible processor chips, Intel's 8085 and Zilog's Z-80, came out CP/M was modified to use all of the new commands available on these faster microprocessors. Because the Z-80 was the first of the new processors to be upgraded to a faster chip, a 4 Mhz chip called the Z-80A, became very popular. It gained popularity with the users of the S-100 bus, and became the manufacturers

standard MPU. By 1976, CP/M and the Z-80 were being used, extensively by many manufacturers. Dozens of languages, and thousands of pro grams have been developed since then, and all of them will run on many different systems because of CP/M's standardization. In the years since then, CP/M, and all of it's programs have been optimized so that they are the most efficient programs possible. Because CP/M has been out so long, there have been thousands, and thousands of Public Domain, and commercial programs developed for it. To get CP/M going on the ST, a single sided diskette must be formatted. After the format is completed, the INITCPM program must be run, and the newly initialized disk inserted for reformatting. After INITCPM has completed its job, if you don't have two disk drives, a Ram disk must be installed. The only Ram disk I found that works with the CP/M system, is the Michtron Ram Disk. Using a Ram disk simplifies TOS to CP/M data transfer. I found that the largest size Ram disk for the 520ST is 180K, and 720K for the 1040ST. To start up, transfer all of the files that you will want in CP/M format, to your Ram disk. You then need to run the program called CPMZ80.TOS, this will activate the CP/M emulator. The only two files needed to run CP/M are CPMZ80.TOS, and EMUIO.PRG. Once this is running, you will find that there are two files on your CP/M formatted disk, the only important one is TOSCPM.COM. To get a list of the files on your disk simply hit the F1 key, then Return, or type DIR then a return. Unlike the normal ST, CP/M is line oriented command processor. To run a program, is must be a file ending in the ".COM" extension. When typing in its name, don't add the ".COM", all you need is first part of the filename. You will have to load each file to CP/M individually, but there is a time-saver. The Shift F3 Key is a real time-saver. The first program that you should convert is TOSDIR.COM, this will help you keep track of the files on your Ram disk. The format used is "TOSCPM C:TOSDIR.COM A:TOSDIR.COM". I use 'C:' to represent my Ram disk, which is usually located on C drive. After the program has completed its operation, you can find what you have on C drive, by typing either Shift F1 then 'C:', or 'TOSDIR C:'.



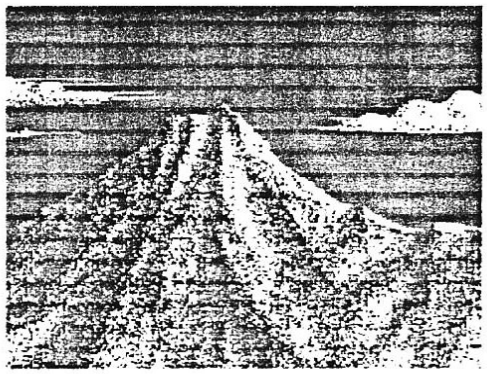
The next important program for the use of CP/M on the ST, is INIDIR.COM. This program will allow you to ready any format disk for use with CP/M, including those using the enhanced density 410K format. To use INIDIR, simply format a disk in whatever format you desire, and then start up your CP/M. from your master disk, (Which should practically be full by the time you've converted all your files) you type "INIDIR A:". The program will wait for you to insert the new disk in your drive, then you hit return to start the operation. Once it is completed, it will be ready to use for CP/M. To format the Ram disk simply type "INIDIR C:", then it will be ready for use as a CP/M format disk. A few of the necessary programs, not included with this CP/M, I had to download from my Apple CP/M, and my S-100 CP/M system. These programs include PIP, STAT, and CAT. In order to really use CP/M effectively, you must have the PIP program, which is short for Peripheral Interchange Program. STAT allows the user to inspect, and change the status of your disks, and CAT gives a very nice Alphabetized directory. To transfer all of the files I wanted, I used the Ram disk. I gave the command "PIP C:=A:*.*[OVG0]" which meant, copy all the files to drive C:, from A:, no matter what filename, then [copy verbatim, and verify the copy, and get them from user area 0]. I then pip'ed the whole lot back to the new disk which I refered to as B:. If you don't keep your TO, and FROM disk separate in this way, CP/M may become confused, and you may loose what you have just copied to the new disk. The reason this happens is that the Directory is kept in Ram, as well as on the disk, and if you change disk in mid-stream, the computer may put the old directory on the new disk. In the documentation the programmers said that all of the bugs were taken out of CP/M, and I believe them, this runs much better than any other version I own. What I described above, only occurred because of user error, I did not realize that they were keeping the directory in ram for effecien cy's sake. Another feature I found, and one that saved a lot of pain, is how the New ST CP/M handles Users. Before subdirectories (also known as folders), were of CP/M. This feature allows all users, which can number from 0 to 15, access to the programs in user area 0. That means, that if you keep all of your utility programs in area 0, you don't have to copy them into your specific user area. This feature comes in very, very handy. I keep all of my programs, in different areas, so with this feature I can PIP (which would be in user area 0) a file from one user area to another, but again, you still have to be careful when you are switching disks. John Russow and I lost about 800K by doing it wrong.

STAT is a useful program as well, it will tell you all sorts of things. To get a list simply type 'STAT VAL:'. To find out how much space you have on your active disk, type 'STAT'. To find out what users are active on your disks, type 'STAT USR:'. Besides these programs CP/M has six built in functions, ready for use by anyone. The first

is DIR, which will tell you what is on your disk. You can also specify the disk drive to look at, and even the files. The total specification is "d:filename.ext", where d: is the drive. I personally prefer the CAT program, which gives more information than DIR. The next built in command is ERA, which does the same thing as the TOS "TRASH" container. The file specification is exactly the same as the DIR files specification. You can also use what are called wild cards, and that are either a "*", or the "?". The * is a general wild card, while the ? is a wild card, for characters only occupying its specific position. The third command is TYPE. On this command you can not use wild cards. The file specification is exactly the same as the DIR command. The fourth command is REN. To rename files, the syntax is "REN d:endname.ext=d:strtname.ext" The "d:" MUST be the same on both sides. What you want the file to be named to MUST come before what it was name. Wild cards cannot be used with this command. The fifth command is SAVE. What this command does is save an area of memory from memory location 100 hexadecimal on up. Its specification is "SAVE amt d:filename.ext" AMT, or rather the amount is the number of pages to save. A Page is 100 hexadecimal memory locations. The sixth and final built in command is USER. The specifica tion is "USER n", where n is a number from 0 to 15. This command changes the user are of the disk you are currently accessing.

For compatibility, I really rate this CP/M high. My version 2.4 dBASE][worked just perfectly, although I had to set it up for a DEC VT-52, in order to use all of its screen commands. The macro assembler, and normal assembler worked just fine, as well as the Microsoft Basic compiler. The real ACID test to this CP/M was running the Apple][Microsoft basic. If a system can run that program it is a really well built version of CP/M. MS-Basic has crashed more systems than you can shake a stick at. The ST passed the test, with an almost perfect score. The only problem after running MBasic, was that all of the disks were set to read only mode, and I had to restart CP/M. We tried running John Russow's report generator, but, because it was set up for Apple graphics, it didn't quite work correctly, but I'm working on it.

All in all I rate the CP/M on the ST, very highly. It certainly beats the heck out of my Apple //e, and its just as fast.



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UPDATED

Publishing Partner as promised has been updated and works fine. However, there is still only one font (helvetica) available.

Atari has announced that Microsoft's Write has been updated and should be free of most bugs.

Easy Draw has also been updated and now works perfectly, I am told.

WordPerfect

WordPerfect for the Atari ST is a full implementation of the latest PC version, which took the IBM market by storm. Files are fully compatible with WordPerfect 4.1 for the IBM, allowing for direct document transfer to and from the ST without loosing document format.

GEM is fully supported and desk accessories are fully accessible from inside WordPerfect.

This wordprocessor has everything one could ask for. It features FOOTNOTES and ENDNOPTES, MACROS, MATH, MERGE, PARAGRAPH and OUTLINE NUMBERING, SORT, DICTIONARRY, THESAURUS, TABLE OF CONTENT and INDEX GENERATION, up to 5 COLUMNS and VIRTUAL MEMORY.

WordPerfect for the ST is scheduled for release 2nd half of 1987. Price at this point in time is not known.

MORE MUSIC FOR THE ST

STEINBERG PRO 24 is available from SBT Marketing, 10 Breadalbane Street, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1C3, (416) 928-5984. Price $385.00

Atari Corp (Canada) calls this software the most complete and userfriendly sequencing package available.

Steinberg Pro 24 allows multiple tracks of tape recorder-like sequencing for your MIDI synthesizers. Unique graphic editing features give you the opportunity to actually 'see the feel' while giving numeric values for notes start points, velocity (volume), and duration.

twenty-four tracks give you ample room for experiment, trying out different ideas for the same part. Patterns may be looped, copied, repeated or appended for complete flexibility. Tempo is programmable so you could even use the sequencer for live shows.

This program is excellent for professionals or amateurs alike, as well as being an educational tool. To be released soon is a music scoring package that will interface with the PRO 24 for professional notation printouts.

NEXT MONTH

We will look at the different CAD (Computer Aided Design) packages available for the ST.

GAMES

Mercinary: You have crash landed on the planet TARG, and you sell your 'skills' to the highets bider of the two occupying forces on the planet. Mercinary operates in medium resolution. Wolfgang likes this one.

Balance of Power: An interesting strategy game, where you take the side of either the Soviet or the American heads of government and face the consequences of your decisions.

TIMEWORKS

Has made available three interrelated pieces of software: Swiftcalc, Data Manager and WordWriter. The package was first available for Commodore computers. The price is around $100.00/module.

Swiftcalc is a powerful spreadsheet, which has almost all the features that VIP has except chained macros, date and today commands. It includes graphics, mathematical and finacial analysis functions. Swiftcalc comes with a **Sideways** program that can be used with any other ASCII files outside Swiftcalc to print text sideways.

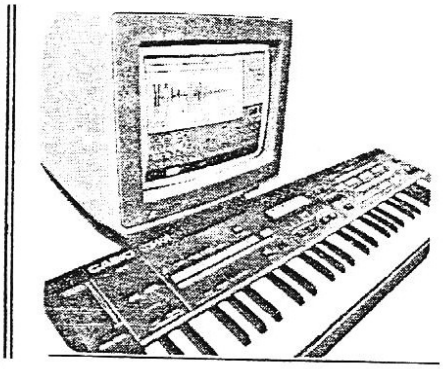
DataManager includes full GEM interfacing, a search feature that allows you to cross-search categories to locate a specific group of items, a sort feature, graphics, math capabilities and cotumize reports.

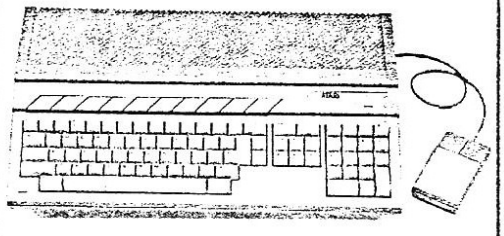
Word Writer offers on screen underlining, italics, boldface, light type, subscript, and superscript; an intergrated outline processor; a cut and paste function; swiftKeys to convert multikey commands to a single stroke; online prompting; a built-in print spooler and three spell checkers.

MUSICAL TERMS

MIDI stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface

SEQUENCER stands for something that determines a regular succession of similar melodic or harmonic units at different pitches.





SYLVIA'S CORNER

by Sylvia Hanna

This month I'd like to tell you about the wonders of synthesizers. I am the proud owner of a DX100 Digital Programmable Algorithm Synthesizer. I love it! Listening to Music Studio has changed considerably since I bought my Yamaha. I was tempted into this new area when I went to Long & McQuade Musical Instruments store on Quadra Street and found that I could rent the mysterious but much talked about CZ Casio 100 synth. So we came home with the rented keyboard and I fell in love with it. The Music Box from Xlent Software was written for the Casio and its just unbelievable to hear how good it sounds. It isn't quite as good on the Yamaha but I understand there are programs out written just for it which I'm dying to find and try. I have the two synthesizers hooked up together using the MIDI thru from the Yamaha and going into the Casio's MIDI IN. Right now I can hear the best of both, but soon I must take the Casio back and one of you lucky people can rent it and enjoy it too. It only costs $30 a month to rent. Just a dollar a day for all that musical entertainment. You have to hear it to understand what all the excitment is about. If you're curious, A & B Sound has a DX 100 Yamaha all set up and will be glad to let you hear it. They are using a keyboard from Dave's Keyboard Centre on Blanshard Street, who kindly lent one to A & B so we could all hear how super it is with our ST's.
I hope you all get a chance to go down and listen to this fantastic musical instrument.

DON'T FORGET

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 5th. 1987. It will be at the saanich library from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm.

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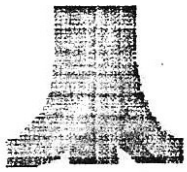

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